

The argument vpon the Epistle of the Apostle Saynt Paule vnto the Ephesians by D. Erasmus of Rotterodame.



Ephesus was sometime the chiefe citie of the lesse Asia, a citie superstitiously geuen to the wourshipping of deuilles, and especially of Diana, for whiche cause it is called in the actes of the Apostles, the wourshipper of Diana, not of Diana the huntour, vnto whome the Poetes attribute bowe and arrows, but Diana with many pappes, whome the Grecians call Polymaston, and saie, she is the noutce of all maner of beastes, after Hieromes reporting. For the temple of Diana at Ephesus, was in the greatest estimation of al the world, so much that the Cronike writers make special mencion of it, almost in al their writings. These men gaue their whole studies vnto curiouse artes and sciences: as we may gather where we reade, that at the preaching of the Apostles, they brought in theyr bookes of enchauntment, and burned them in the fyre, and whan they had coumpred the price, they founde it to be fiftie thousand silverlinges, as it is purposed in the .xix. Cap. of the Actes. And therfore to thentent he might withdraue them from those great errours, he taried still among them thre yeares, reauaylling all that while, to the bettermost of hys power, to bring the thyng to passe, that myght be to the profitable forwarding of their saluation, albeit many of them made great resistance agaynst him, as he specifyeth hymselfe in an other place. And there he was cast to beastes: lyke as he maketh mencion, in his seconde Epistle to the Corinthians. And whan he departed from thence, he commaunded Timothee to remaine there still amonge them. And like as that Citie was full of Curious menne, and suche as were geuen to magicall artes, even so had it many great learned men in it. By reason wherof, Paule, as he tempereth himselfe according to the maners and natures of all men, maketh often mencion of deuils and spirites, whan he sheweth the difference of good men and bad. Besides these, he openeth certayne darke hard sentences. For there is none of his Epistles, that hath so darke and hidde sentences in it, as this to the Ephesians. So as it shoulde seme, that this Epistle was the chiefest occasion, why Petre wrote after this sorte. Euen as our derely beloved brother Paule, according to the wisdom geuen vnto hym, wrote to you, yea, almoste in euery Epistle, speaking of suche thynges: among whiche, many thynges are harde to be vnderstanden, which they that are vblearned, and vnstable, peruert as they do other scriptures to theyr owne destruction. Therfore because these men abound constantly in the fapth, he exhorteth them to continue and goe still forwarde, until they were become perfect: putting them in remembraunce, what maner of people they were, whan they were addict vnto naughtines, & did seruiue vnto wicked spirites: and what they are become now, that they are engrafted vnto Christ: and teacheth them withall, that althoughe the grace of the Gospell was promised vnto the Jewes, yet that by the eternall decree of God, it was rightfully enlarged vnto the Gentiles also: and that he was a mynister ordained of God, to that same office. And forasmuche as he wrote this Epistle, being in prison, he exhorteth them, not to cast doونه theyr hartes for his afflictions, but rather thinke, that they haue so much the more cause to reioyce. These

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the Argument

things he treateth of in the first and second Chapters. In the other three, he describeth the fourme of godly conversation vnto them, shewing what is to be folowed, and what is to bee auoyded: the dueties of the husbandes to the wyues, and of the wyues vnto the husbandes: the offices of parentes to their children, and of the children to theyr parentes: the dueties of maisters to their seruantes, and of seruantes to their maisters. This Epistle was written from the cite of Rome by Tichicus the Diacone, whome he speaketh of in the end of the Epistle, calling him a faithful minister. Ambrose saith furthermore, that he wrote it in prison, when he was caried from Hierusalem to Rome, and liued vnder suertie without the tentes, in the renement that he had taken for hye.

The ende of the Argument

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle of sainte Paule the Apostle to the Ephesians.

¶ The i. Chapter.

Paule an Apostle of Iesus Christ by the will of God. To the saintes, whiche are at Ephesus, and to them whiche beleue on Iesus Christ. Grace be with you and peace from God our father, and from the Lord Iesus Christ. Blessed be God the father of our lord Iesus Christ, whiche hath blessed vs with all manner of spiritual blessing in heauenly thinges by Christ, according as he had chosen vs in him, before the foundations of the worlde were layde, that we shoulde be holy, and without blame before him, thow so lowe. Whiche ordeyned vs before thow so Iesus Christe to be holy vnto himselfe, according to the good pleasure of his will, in the praple of the glorie of his grace, wherewith he hath made vs accepted thow so the beloued. By whom we haue redemption thow so his blood, euen the forgiveness of sinnes, according to the riches of grace wherof he hath multiplied vnto vs abundantly in all wisdome and prudence. And hath opened vnto vs the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, whiche he had purposed in himselfe, to haue it declared, when the time was ful come: that he might set vp all thinges perfectly by Christ (both the thinges which are in heauen, and the thinges whiche are in earth) euen by him, by whom we are made holy, and were thereto predestyned according to the purpose of hym by whose power all thynges are wrought, according to the purpose of his owne will: that we, which before beliened in Christ, shoulde be vnto the praple of his glorie. In whom also we beleue, forasmuche as we haue heard the word of truth: euen the Gospell of your saluation: wherin when ye had beleued, ye were sealed with the holy spirit of promise which is the earnest of our enheritaunce to the recovering of the purchased possession, vnto the praple of his glorie.

The text.



Paule an apostle, not of Moses, nor of any man, but of Iesus Christe, whose businesse I take in hande, being sente, not vpon myne owne head or by mennes commaundment, but by the Autoritie and commaundement of God the father, whiche, by hys sonne, hath commaunded me to preache the doctrine of the Gospell among the heathens. I write this Epistle to all them that leade theyr lyfe at Ephesus, and leade theyr lyfe after suche sorte, that they applye theyr endeuour to kepe them vnsported from the vices and vncleanesses of this worlde, and with a sincere conscience, beleue the Gospell of Iesus Christe, not looking for rewarde of innocencie and holynesse, any where elles, than from whence they received the example: nor waiting for the ende of their felicitie, of any other, than of whome sprong the begynnyng. In the meane season, I write vnto you, not as those ble to doe, that measure their felicitie, by the dignities of this worlde, but I wythe, that God the Author of all goodnesse (whome now we may call euen our father, not for that, that he created vs onely, but muche rather, that being engrafted vnto the body of Christe, we are receaued into the enheritaunce of Chyldren) maye daylye increase in you hys beneficence, wherewith he hath freely deliuered you from the transgressions of youre olde life, and of vngodlye hath made you folowers of Innocencie and righteousnes: and so continue you in concord, that you maye bee of one mynde amonge your selues, and that being reconciled once to God, you maye take heede, that you breake not (in falling to synnes agayne) the promysse, that you couenaunted with hym, through Iesus Christ hys sonne, by whome

Grace be vnto you & peace.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

and with whome, he geueth vnto vs al thinges, whom also we shal from henceforth woorthely call our lord, forasmuche as he hath set vs at libertie from the tyrannie of the deuil, with the price of his holy sacred blood, and taken vs to himselfe, and hauing deliuered vs from the deuilles seruitude, hath made vs his owne. The seruitude is fortunate, that vniuerseth vs to Christ. Now breit this thyng happened not vnto vs by chaunce, nor by oure owne merite. But God the father of our lord Iesus Christ, is altogether to be praised on our behalfe, that of hys free fauour, hath pokened all gentle kyndenesse vpon vs, not bestowing those thinges vnto vs, that pertaine to the vse of this lyfe, and bodely sustenance onely, but also those excellent giftes, that auayle to the saluation of soule, and lyfe in mortall: which lyfe abydeth vs in heauen, through Christ, by whome the father hath set heauen gate wyde open. And because no manne shoulde be curious to aske, how cometh this so an extraordinary fauour, from whence cometh such a wonderfull gentleness? It was so resolutely determined through the goodnes of God, by an eternall decree, euen before the foundations of the worlde were layed. For euen then he had chosen vs, that by hys sonne, by whome he created, gouerneth and restoreth all thynges, our forerunners should be wyppd awaye, and we be cummen holy and faultles, not onely in the syght of men, but also of God himselfe, who esteemeth man according to the secret affectes of the minde, and that, not with the terror of Moses lawe, (the seueritie wherof is tryed vnto this purpose altogether vneffectuall) but with the beliffe and loue required in the Gospell, whiche wyrmeth more of suche as be willing, than the laboure enforced by rigorous compellyng. For it is not a perforce seruice, that the seruantes doe constrainedly, for feare of inconuenience, or for theyr masters dyspleasure, but that, that children dooe vncompelled by loue and good affectyon. Which thyng was impossible to be performed by any strength of vs, had not God by hys eternall decree chosen vs into the roume and heritage of children, through onely Iesus Christe, vnto whome he hath so incorporated vs, through fayth and loue, that beyng made his members we may be one with him, so that by his participacion, we attaine that thyng that was not due to our deservynges. And therefore we may in no wyse attribute any thanks vnto our selues. In asmuche as it stode with the good pleasure of hym, that is naturally good, to declare and manifest his free liberalitie bestowed vpon vs, more playne and open to the whole worlde. We (as concerning our owne strength) could not possibly be any thing els, than the enemies of God, and very abiect slaves, but that he hath reconciled vs to himselfe, by Christ, to whome he loueth more than can be exprested, and of damnable torments, hath made vs acceptable deare children. As long as beyng snared with the danger of sinne we were members of the deuil, we could neither loue God, nor be loued of God. But inasmuch as his most deere sonne hath redeemed vs with the price of his most holy blood from the bondage of sin, and incorporated vs as members vnto himselfe, the father cannot possibly choose but loue those, to whome it pleased him to make partners with hys sonne. This benefite is surely inestimable, but notwithstanding suche was the will a bounteous largesse of almighty god, which although it be manifestly apparēt in every thing, yet it more peculially abounded vpon vs, forasmuche as he openeth vnto vs (as a mercifull harted father vnto his children) the secret mystery of his eternal will, so many long yeres hidden from the worlde, the knowlage wherof is most hygh

Willed bee
God the father
there.

According
as he had
chosen vs.

Through
loue.

Which our
baptized vs.

To the
praise of the
glory of his
grace.

hygh wisedome and chiefe prudence, much more excellent than that knowlege, wherein being singulately learned in humayne disciplines, ye haue excelled o-
ther sortes of men euer vnto this day. Whannes wit attineth the knowlege of
the secrettes of nature, & yet whan they are knowne to the vttermost they make
no man any thing more godly at all. But this secret mystery, that we here speake
of, no reason of mannes mynde coulde attaine, onles God himselfe had opened
it vnto our knowlege to bring vs to true perfite felicitie. But if a man would
ask, for what cause hath God kept it close so long, and now at length manife-
sted it plainly: I haue nothing to answer, but that it so pleased the good wil
of him, that willeth al for the beste, in as muche as he is goodnes it selfe. What,
that is new vnto vs, is not new with him. For that that he shewed open to the
world in sending his sonne now in the later dayes, was eternally decreed with
the father and the sonne, albeit he would by his certayn & vnspeakeable counsaill
haue it secretly hidden, until his determined time were fulfilled, to open this se-
cret vnto mankynde. And herein the losses of tyme, that the people in times past
misspent in vaine seeking saluation, some by the outward obseruation of Moses
law, some by the studie of philosophie, some by superstitious religion & wor-
shipping of deuils, should be expelled, and the whole summe of all thinges y ap-
pertaine to true innocencie & to true godlines, shuld be ascribed only to Christ,
besides to whom, no man ought to desire any thing, forasmuch as he, being the
only fountayn, is content to gratify our peticious with any good thyng, that
is eyther in heauen or earth. For God the father hath appoynted him to be the
head of all, that all men should depend of hym only, and to trust to receiue at
his hand, whatsoeuer is rightly to be desired, and to acknowledge that it com-
meth of him, whatsoeuer he of his bounteous libetallie bestoweth vpon vs.
By whome also, such abundant felicitie hath chaunfed vnto vs, that we were
chosen vnto the lotte and inheritaunce of immortalitie, not of our owne deser-
uinges, but because we were predestinate to it by his decree long ago, by whose
arbitrement and power all thinges are ordred and disposed by his vnspeake-
able counsaill on our behalfe, according to his owne wil, who, forasmuch as he
is the best & the most wise, he cannot possibly wil any thyng, but those thinges
that are both best & wisest. Such was his determinate wil, that we should be
called vnto this inheritaunce & felowship of Christ, not for our owne desertes,
but of his free benignitie, so that through the monition of the propheties say-
inges, had in a manner fixed our hope in Christ promised vnto vs, yea eue afore
the truth of the gospel came to light: so that this benefit shoulde not be ascribed
to the obseruation of Moses law, but that al the praise shoulde wholly redound
to the glory of the goodnes of God, who was content freely to geue it to vs by
his sonne. Neuertheles we Jewes were not called alone to the promised felow-
ship of Christ, although in distrusting the shadowes of Moses lawe, we haue
embrace the truth of the gospell, wherof we trust assuredly to receiue true
saluation, yea without any helpe of the lawe at all: But you also albeit you are
uncircumcised, yet as soone as ye beleued in the same gospell, you were chosen in-
to the same felowship. For we are not debtours vnto Circumcisiō, in y we are re-
ceiued into the hope of immortalitie, but vnto faith, which if you haue as wel
as the Jewes, what shoulde let you frō the gentle goodnes of god? The cutting a
way of y foreskin is a mark to discerne y Jewe frō the Gentien. But y mark
of the gospell extendeth further & is not printed vpon the bodye, but in the soule.
With this signe, all are marked indifferentlye of what nation soeuer they be,

In al wis-
dome and
prudence.

According
to his good
pleasure.

That we
may to his
praise.

In whome
we also.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

that embrace the doctrine of the gospel, and beleue his promises. Some will aske, what token is it, that discerneth the Christians from the wicked? Truly the holy gost, and the inward affect (not a scruple bonde affect, but such a one as is commonly in good children) which maketh vs with al our hart to beleue the promises of the gospel, yea although they do not yet in this world presently appere. For þe inheritaunce wherunto we are engrafted, shal not be fully performed, but at the resurrection of þe bodies. Howbeit, he geueth vs his spirit in the meane season, as a pledge & earnest of þe promised inheritaunce. By this token we are surely certified, þe god accepteth vs for his childre, not doubting, but he wil take his owne to himselfe, whō he hath redeemed by þe deathe of his sōne. For þe merciful gentleness of god is desirous to winne many, & wold haue his magnificence most specially knowē & notified to mākind, whiche þe more it is opened abroad, þe moe shal speake of it. God in times past cared peculiarlye for þe Jewes, in that he deliuered the fro the seruitude of þe Egipcians. But it was a small matter, to haue þe goodnesse of god set forth only in one natio. His wil is to be praised & extolled of al mē, inasmuche as he hath freely redeemed al fro the bondage of sinne. For þe he esteemeth as pertinent to his glory, þe not only the Jewes, but al the nations of þe whole world through beleife of the gospel, shoulde be partakers of saluatiō.

Wherefore I also after that I heare of the faith which ye haue in the Lord Iesu, and lone vnto all the sanctes) cease not to geue thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Iesus Christ, the father of glory, maye geue vnto you the spirit of wisdom & vnderstand by the knowledge of him selfe, & lighte the eyes of your myndes, & ye may knowe what the hope is, wherunto he hath called you, and how rich the glory is of his inheritaunce vpon the sanctes, and what is the exceeding greatnes of his power to vnderstande, which beleue according to the washing of that his mightie power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised hym from the dead, and set him on his right hand in heavenly things, above all rule, and power, and might and domynion, and about euerie name þe is named not in this worlde only, but also in the world to come: and hath put all things vnder his feet, and hath made hym above all things, the head of the congregation, & he is his body, and the fulnes of him, that filleth all in all.

For this consideraciō, I passe not whether you be circūcised or not, whā I see euident tokens in you of euāgelicall saluatiō, first in that you haue reposed your whole trust in the lord Iesu, thā in that you declare your Christian charitie towards al Saintes the members of Christ. For this cause I cease not to geue thanks for you. For Euāgelicall sinceritie is of suche efficacy, þe it causeth vs to be glad of other mennes comodities, no lesse thā of our owne. And I make alwaies mencion of you in my prayers, wherw I daily call vpon God for þe aduancement of the gospels businesse, & he, which is god of al sortes of people in differentie, & of Iesu Christ also after his humane nature, of whō also Christ hath to be god vnto whō, as vnto the autor & fountaine of al goodnes, the fūme of al glory both wholly belōg, maye geue vnto you, more & more þe earnest wherof I haue spokē, his spirit, to inspire into your myndes this heavenly wisdom, and the knowlage of this mystérie: that you maye knowe hym, that is thonly autor of all healtie, & that you may behold hym in the meane while, as it were, with eyes, not with bodily eyes but with the eyes of the harte and mynde, that see through the light of faith, wherewith the thynges are also seene, that are to come, whiche cannot be seene with the grosse bodily eyes: whereby you maye knowe that, which no humayne philosophie teacheth, how blissed the tribulation is, whiche he hath called vs to truste vpon: and how excellent þe dignitie of

of this most plectuous inheritaunce is, which the sayntes shal receiue, & howe great the largenesse, and how exceeding the greatnesse of his power is, which he declareth euē now in vs: the which also (as it were with a certain secret enforcement & cannot be expressed in tongue) hath transformed & altered vs fro our olde trade, after such sorte, that we contēne al other thinges, & trust onely to him, & cōtēning those thinges which we se, we hope after such thinges of him, as we se not, & such as he hath openly declared before in our head Christ: who of his mightie power hauing raised from death to life immortal, he hath exal: ted vnto so high honoz, that he hath set him on his owne right hand in þ king: do of heauen, & geuen him autoritie ouer al other rule, potestate, power & lord: ship, and euery other name of dignitie or power, how excellent so euer it be: & hōue these afore rehearsed, eþther in this woꝛlde or in the woꝛlde to come, that he may be lord not onely ouer bodely and earthly thinges, but also ouer spirituall and heauenly thinges. So ferre hath he subdued al thinges without exception vnder his fete. And to make our hope moze stedfast and certayn, that we shal also come to the felowship of the same gloꝛye, forasmuche as he hath made Christe lord ouer all thinges, his pleasure was also that he shoulde be the head vnto al the whole flocke of the beleeuing, that cleaue so fast to Christe, as the whole body is coupled to the head, that the one can not be disceiued fro the other. Finally the gloꝛy of the head is common to the rest of the members, wherunto the head is so set aboue, that it powreth his good nourishment into euery one of them. The bodye is not perfect, vnles the head be at it: and the head wanteth sumwhat, if the body be not set to perfectly consummate in all his mē: bres: wherunto Christe doth seuerally pōwe his excellent giftes in such wise, that by himselfe he fulfilleth all thinges, and liueth and reigneth now whole and entirely perfect, hauing his members vnted vnto himselfe.

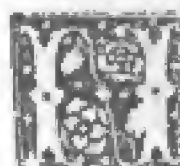
He hath brought in Christe ac.

And hath made him aboue all things the head.

¶ The ii. Chapter.

And you hath he quickened, when as ye were dead in trespasses, and synnes, in the which in tyme past ye walked, according to the course of this woꝛlde, euen after the gentiler that euerly in the ayte, the spirite that neuer worketh in the children of vnbelyfe, among whō we all had our conuersion also in tyme past, in the lustes of our flesh, and fulfilled þ wyl of the flesh and of the minde: and were by nature the children of wrath, euen as well as other. But God which is ryght in mercie, (for his great loue wherewith he loueth vs) euen when we were dead by synnes, quickened vs together in Christ (by grace are ye saued) and raysed vs vp together with hym: & made vs syde together with hym among them of heauen in Christ Iesu. That in tymes to come, he might shewe the exceeding riches of his grace, in kindness to vs which thowgh Christ Iesu. For by grace are ye made saue thowgh we synners, and that not of our selues. It is the gyfte of God, and cometh not of works, lest any man shoulde boast hym selfe. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Iesu vnto good works, which God appointeth, that we shoulde walke in them.

The recte.



¶ We make me this, how the father hath begon in a maner to accomplish euen now in you, that that is accomplished already in Christ, & that he after ward accomplished in you. Christ dyed and rose agayn, & shall neuer after dye any more. Certes he was not subiecte to synne, albeit, forasmuche as he tooke vpon him an humaine bodie, he was subiecte to mortalitie. To be bryefe, like as sin is a certain death of the soule, and the foreshadowing of eternall death: euen so is innocencie a certayne life of the soule, and the beginning of eternal life. But of this maner of lyfe, God, that geueth vs his spirite, is the prince. And the deuil is þ auoz of death, hauing also a spirite of his owne, wherewith those that

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In the con-
dition of un-
believers.

And were
by nature
the children
of wrath.

But God
whiche is
riche in
mercie.

By grace
are ye
made sa-
uours.

It is the
gift of god.

be enspired, are capt into the pleasures of this world, and plainly distrust the promisses of eternal lyfe. Christ dyed for our offences, and rose agayn to make vs sure of the immortalitie to come. In the meane tyme, after hys example, you also being engrafted to Christ through baptisme, are dead to your sinnes and wickednes: wherin as long as you liued vngodly, you were dead in dede, for asmuch as you had assyaunce in nothing, but noy some shadowes of good thynges, wherwith this worlde for a tyme discreueth suche, as wantyng the spirite of God, are lead by the spirite of Satan, whose tyrannye in the meane while is permitted ouer this lower element. His spirit (I say) and he himselfe seereth out as it were his own power in them, that hauing no trust in the promisses of the Gospel, set they whole felicitie in vniuersall and transitory thynges: and geue no care to God the father, that allureth them to true felicitie, but had leauer serue that wicked cruell maister, whome in tymes past you serued, and not you alone, but all we also. For albeit the law restrayned vs from the worshipping of Images, yet our lyfe was altogether defiled with noy some lustes of corporall thynges, by the enforment whereof, we passed of the tyme, not boyng those thynges, whiche the holy ghost commaunded, but those that our owne mynde, geuen to filthie affectes, bad vs doe. By reason wherof it came to passe, that like as they, which are encozporated to Christ through faith, appertayne to the inheritance, that is promised to obedient childyren: euen so we as disobedient childyren, should haue belonged to a sette contrary inheritance: that is to say, we should haue becomen the companions of hym, to whome we had forned our selues. That death is eternal, that is appoynted to the wicked.

Wherunto we also were subiect, as much as other, touchyng our owne state, and recondicion. We had addicted our selues vnto it of our owne free choice, but it was not in our power to wynde vs agayne out of that most miserable seruitude. Nowe you haue heard of our death, now you haue harde of our destruction, but wherof cometh lyfe, wherof cometh saluacion? Truly not of our desertes, nor yet by the benefite of Moses lawe. Whence than? Surely of the free largesse of God the father, whose bounteousnesse and louyng affection is so plenteous and so excreadingly great to mankynde warde, that he hath not onely not punished vs according to our desertes, but also when we were dead by reason of our sinnes, he hath called vs agayne to lyfe together with Christ. This I say, was not of our deserting, but came off free gyfte. And he hath not onely called vs agayne to lyfe with hys sonne, but also he hath carryed vs by feth these thynges þ are benethe, vnto the thynges that are in heauē, & there hath placed vs through Christ Ies^{us}: by whō we haue indifferēly together whatsoeuer he (our head) hath: & do possesse now in hope, all þ we shal shortly after possesse in very dede. Thus it was his wil, that at the resurrection, when his promisses shal evidently appere, he may declare his most aboundant liberalitie, which it pleased hi of his free goodnes to powre vpon vs, not for our owne good dedes sake, but for the merites of Ies^{us} Christ. For the thing is often to be rehearsed, þ ought to be fixed most depely in your haeris. It cometh of free grace, I say, that you haue obtained saluacion, from the destruction, wherein ye were tangled: lest ye should folow the error of some of the Jewes, which thinke to be saued for obseruing the preceptes of Moses law. You are indebted for your saluacion to faith, wherby ye believed the gospel, & yet you may not brag of faith, as though it come of yourselfe. Christ loued you first, & hauing drawen you to himselfe, he hath geuen you power, that you should loue hym agayne.

And

And he it is, that hath freely powored into you the gift of faith: by the whiche you should let darkenes apart, and see the lychte of the Gospels veritie. It is wholly therfore to be ascribed vnto his free gift, so that no man hath thereof to boast as though it were of his owne. In that we are created, we are endeared to God. Agayne, in that we are regenerate by saythe and baptisme, and as it were made a newe, after an other maner, we are diuorced from the felowshyp of our parent the sinfull Adam, and ingrafted in Christ, the prince of innocencie: to the intent that by the helpe and example of him, we should from henceforth apply the offices of true godlinesse, & that renouncing the olde man, we should represent the new man in new dedes, and become so ferre vnlike to our selues in condicions, that a man might iustly say, it were not we. For God, by the doctrine of the gospell, hath opened vnto vs the rewarde of Immortalitie, to the intent we should preace hard vnto it through innocencie of lyfe and well doing. For the euangelical faith is not an idle matter, but hath an inseparable companion, charitie, whiche causeth more dueties to be done of the willing, than the prescriptes of the lawe are hable to enforce of the constrained.

For we are his workmanship.

Wherefore, remember that peeing in yime pasted Scoundrels in the flesh, were called vncircumcision from that whiche is called circumcision in the flesh, whiche circumcision is made by handes. Remember (I saye) that at that yime ye were without Christ, being sharten from the common welth of Israel, and strangers from the testaments of the promes, and had no hope, and were without God in this world. But now by the meanes of Christ Iesu, by whiche commaie were sate of, are made nye by the bloude of Christ. For he is our peace, whiche hath made of both, one, and hath broken downe the wal that was a stoppe betwene vs, and hath also put away, therin his flesh, the cause of hatred, such the lawe of commandmentes contained in the lawe written, for to make of thyspe one newe man in him selfe, to making peace, and to reconcyle both vnto God in one body throught the crosse, and haue hated thereby: and came and preached peace to you whiche were a sate of, and to them that were nye. For throught hym we both haue an entrance, in one spate vnto the father.

The state

The yoke of Moses lawe is not layed vpon you. For one onely lawe of Christ: an Charitie, is sufficient to accomplishe all dueties. The Jewes are not endeared to theyr lawe for theyr saluation, but yet you are so much more bounden to the goodwille of god, as you were more far of than they from the true worshiping of god, & from true religiō. Therfore yf ye may the more vnderstande, how muche you are bounden to the bountie of God, for being nowe as ye are, your duetic is to remember, what ye haue bene afoze yime. For you were sumtyme Heathens, after the corporall distinction of kynred, whome the nacion of the Jewes, bragging of their carnal circumcision that is done with handes, namē contumelliously vncircumcised, and repute them for prophane persons and abominable, supposing this felicitie, that was promised long age by the oracles of the prophetes, to belong peculiarly to themselves: and not vnderstandyng that they be reputed as vncleane persones before God, whose inward myndes are vncircumcised. But you at that time were vncircumcised both in body and soule, being so muche more abiect & in miserable condicion than the Jewes, in that ye had no hope of Christes benefite to youwarde, that is to saye, because you were vtterly astranged, as well from the tytle and felowshyp of the nation of Jewes, vnto whome he seemed to be peculiarly promised, as also exiled from the couenauntes of God, wherein he promised in sayng to Abraham the father of that nacion. In thy seebe shall all nacions bee blessed.

Having no hope.

Gene. xxi.

And

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

And to bee briefe, there remained no apparent hope of your saluacion, in as-
much as being worshippers of deuils, ye had no knowledg in thys worlde
of the true God, where as the Jewes called him theyr God, and he again cal-
led them hys people. Nevertheless, as soon as the truth of the Gospell
shewed furth his lyght, Christ turned the course of thynges hysyde downe,
and broughte so to passe, that you, whiche seemed nothyng to petyne vnto
God, were now kept mooste nere vnto him not by the circumcision of the fore-
skynne, but by the blood of Iesu Christ, with the price wherof ye were not on-
ly deliuered from the sinnes of your olde conuersacion, but also reconcyled vnto
God the father. In tymes past, you were at discorde with the Jewes, yea
you were at discorde with God: but Christ the Autour of peace and con-
corde, stroke away al the difference of circumcised, and not circumcised: he toke away
the ceremonies of Moses law, as it had bene a wall, that deuyded the concord
betwene the Jewes and the Gentiles, so that two sortes of people, beeing as
fore most ferre different one from the other, should agree and growe together
in one, bitterly expelling theyr olde grieues. For before Christes cunnyng, the
gentiles did wonderfully abhorre the Jewes obseruances, as superstitious
thynges: and the Jewes contrariewise were in such conceipt with themselves
by reason of their ceremonies, that they held al such accursed as were without
them. Christ therfore by his woonderful deulfe, abolished and brought out of
use that hated lawe, that consisteth onely in the prescribed carnall ceremonies,
so that he would neyther alyenate the Jewes, nor pisse the Gentiles with the
burthen of it. For he beynge very God, and very man after the flesh, obserued
the commaundementes of the lawe, and yet he testified, that the saluacion,
which he brought after the spirit, belonged no lesse to the Gentiles than to the
Jewes, so that now you should neyther be abhominable because of your un-
circumcision, nor the Jewes any flouter because of theyr circumcision, but
that in dispatchyng the olde cankerduelle of bothe those nations, he mighte of
two make one new, so growe together into one new man Christ, the common
saluour indifferentlye of them both. And lyke as he made the Jewes and the
Gentiles at one betwene themselves, even so he made them both at one with
god, that there should be nothing to breake the atonement, but that the thynges
in heauen and the thynges in earth, should be ioyned together as it were into
one body. The death of Christ, which he suffered for our sinnes, hath vnited
vs to God, with whome no man is at peace, that hath deleyght in synne. And
forasmuche as this peace is bestowed both to the Jewes and to the Gentiles
indifferently, there is no cause, why eyther of them should thinke them better
than the other: specially in asmuche as the pledge and gage of the holy ghost,
wherof we spake a litle before, is geuen commonlye to them bothe, without
difference. Now we se it come to passe, that Csaie by inspiracyon prophesied
long agoe, should come. For Christ hath not offered the doctrine of the gospell
to the Jewes onely, vnto whome this blessed felicitie seemed to be peculiere-
ly promysed, and whiche also after theyr sorte, were the true worshippers of
God, but also vnto you, whiche were ferre of, both from the kindred of the
people of Jewes, and from the worshippynge of the true God: teaching there-
by, that throughe hys death, bothe the flockes of shepe should goe together
into one shepefolde, and knowe hym to bee theyr onely shephearde.

He it is, that hath opened vnto vs the entraunce to the father, who before was, displeased at our sinnes, and none other hath opened this entraunce to the Jewes, than he who hath opened the same to the Gentiles: but we are all bounden to him alone, in that we are now bolde to appoche bothe to that merciful father, hauing confidence in that commune spirite, which inspirerh this assured trust indifferently into the hearers of vs bothe.

¶ Now these ye are not straungers and sojourners, but citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God: and are built vpon the foundation of the Apostles and prophetes, Iesus Christ himselfe being the head corner stone, in whome what building fouere is coupled together, it groweth vnto an holy temple in the Lord, in whome ye also are built together, to be an habitation of God thowhe the holy ghoſte.

Now therefore, to the intente you shoulde not thinke your selues the house, because you came not of the stocke of Dauid or Abraham, as concerning the kindred of the flesh, or because ye are without the lawe of Moses, in asmuche as after the spirite, ye are citizens and felowes of saintes, pertainig to the house of God, which is builded, not of the Jewes onely, but of al them, that purely beleue the Gospell. The foundations of this house, are the Apostles, the preachers of the Gospell, and the Prophetes, who shewed long agoe in their prophecies, that the gifte of the Gospell should now be indifferently common to all men. To this foundation you are also faste layed. And to be shorte, Iesus Christe is the chiefe head stone of this building, whiche being layed in the corner, coupleth and keepeth the walle together on bothe sydes: by whose power and couplyng, all the buildyng of the beleuers, compacted together on euery syde, daily increaseth, and riseth vnto a perfectly holy spirituall temple, consecrated of the lord himselfe. And of this holy building you are also parte, whilst, lyke lyuely stones layed vpon the same foundations, and holden together of the same corner stone, you make, in purenes of mynde and spirite, vnto God an holye habitation vnspotted from all synnes, and voyde of lustes. There be none receyued into Moses temple but Jewes, but to this temple all they pertaine indifferently, that embrace the fayth of the Gospell.

¶ The iii. Chapter.

¶ For this cause, I Paule am a prisoner of Iesus Christe for you Beathan: If ye haue heard the ministracion of the grace of God whiche is giuen me to youwarde. For by reuelacion shewed he the mystery vnto me, as I wrote afore in fewe wordes, to wether when ye reade, ye may vnderstand my knowlage in the mystery of Christ, which mystery in times pasted was not opened vnto the sonnes of men, as it is now declared vnto his holy Apostles and prophetes by the spirite; that the Gentiles should be inheritous also, and of the same bodie, and partakers of his promys in Christ, by the meanes of the Gospell, whereof I am made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God whiche is giuen vnto me after the working of his power. Vnto me the least of all saintes is this grace giuen, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unspeakable riches of Christ, and to make all men see, what the felowship of the mystery is, which from the beginning of the world hath bene hid in God, whiche made all things thowhe Iesus Christe to the intent, that now vnto the rulers and powers in heauensly things, might be known by the congregation, the manifolde wisdom of God, according to the eternall purpose, whiche he brought in Christe our lord, by whome we haue boldenes and enteraunce with the confidence whiche is by the fayth of him.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle



By studie
richer
he the mil-
lery vnto
me.

Ad that you maye geue the more constanthe credence
hercunto, vnderstande, that I Paule, am laden with
these bondes for no cause els, that is to say, not for any
naughtie dede, but for Iesus Christes sake, vnto whome
I trauaill to winne you, Gentiles, wherat the Iewes
haue indignacion. Yf ye haue heard tell, that this office
was committed to me of Christ himself, that I should
preache the saluacion of the Gospel (whiche some afore
tyme iudged to belong to none but to the Iewes) in e-

uery place, yea euen among the Gentiles, of whose number you are. This se-
cret mistery, being hidden before to other Apostles, Christ opened most chiefe-
ly to me, lyke as we begonne to speake brievely of before, in our writinges to
other nations, by readyng whereof, you may know, that I am not ignorant
of the secret counsell of Christ, who when he tolde Ananias beforehand, that I
carie his name among the Gentiles, he commaunded me than to goe and dooe
his message vnto the Gentiles that dwelled farre of, whiche thing before se-
med abhominable, that wicked persones and Image worshippers should be
called to the felowship of the gospel. Notwithstanding it was so decreed with
God long a goe, yea eue afore the world was made, and in a maner opened vnto
the prophetes by inspiration, albeit it was not playnly opened to the world,
as it is now by me, that the Gentiles, through onely fayth of the Gospel, with-
out helpe of Moses law, should attayne saluacion: yea in so much that the chie-
fest of the Apostles durst not admit suche as were not circumcised, vnto bap-
tisme. But now it is playnly opened vnto the holye Apostles of Christe, and
to hys prophetes, by inspiacion of the holy goste, that the Gentiles through
fayth are so vnited vnto the Iewes, that they are comen in to the felowship of
selfe same inheritaunce, and growe in to all one bodie, reioyeyng in theyr com-
mon head, Christe, and by reason therof, are becomen parteners of all the pro-
misses, that abyde suche, as beleue the Gospel of Christ: to preache the which
Gospel, autoicie is committed vnto me, and I cease not to dooe my com-
maunded office, labouring constantly hitherto in the Ghospels busines, euen
vnto emprisonmentes and fetters, not that I am any thing more, of mine owne
strength, for so painfull a busines, but he that appoynted that office to me, hath
laied his owne helping hande to the same. And so it is, that I being (as concer-
ning myne owne habilitie) feeble and weake, am by his benefite strong and full

Into me
the least of
all saines
is this
grace geuen
me.

of courage agaynst the stormes of all mischies. I boast not myne owne wor-
things, for I cōfesse that I am the least of Saines: but yea (as litle as I am)
it hath pleased the goodnes of God, to putte me in trust with this businesse of
moſte weightie importancie, that I should publishe and preache among the
Gentiles (whiche before this time knewe nothyng of God) the vnſearchable
richeſſe of Christ, which he offereth plenteouſly to all men: and bying to lycht
the thyng, that before was hidden, that the benefite of the ghospell is to be diſ-
penſed and miniſtered to all maner of nations, whiche before was ſuppoſed to
be geuen onely to the Iewes, although it was otherwyſe decreed eternally of
God, the maker and gouernour of all thynges: notwithstanding, his will was
to haue this Counſayll of hys diuine intente, to be per hitherto kepte ſecretre:
whiche in theſe tymes he woulde ſo openly manifeſte, and that by the congre-
gacion, wherinto he powred ſuche aboundance of ſpirituall giſtes, that his
manifolde

manifeste wisdomē whiche with wonderfull deuises disposeth all thinges; through death geuyng life, through shame exaltynge to gloire, through humilitie aduancynge Goddes maiestie, whiche no man in tyme past coulde haue Imagined. Shoulde now we bee brought to lycht, not onely to the brode world, but euen to princes, and chiefeste of Angelles and deuilles, that haue to doe in the skyes and in the vppermost parte of the ayre: whiche thynges, albeit they myght geisse should come to passe; that mankynde shoulde once be redemed, yet this was not knowen, by what reason, the wisdomē of God had eternallye decreed, to bring it to passe: whiche thing now at length was openly knowen; when he sent his sonne into the world, who hauing taken vpon him an hyman bodye, would by vnspokeable meanes, vniite and couple the congregacion to hymselfe, whereof our lozde Iesus Christe shoulde bee the head: by whome, like as Innocence chaunced vnto vs, in that, that our sinnes were doen a waye, euen so chaunced vnto vs an assured truste also, that as children, we shoulde not be afrayd to appoche vnto the father, whose displeased countenance we durst not as yet beholde. For what shoulde we bee afrayed of, hauyng suche a heade, that in no wise suffereth any of his members to perishe, albeit here in the meane season we suffer sum affliction.

Wherefore I beseech, that ye faint not because of my tribulations that I suffer for your sakes: whiche is your praise. For this cause I bowe my knees vnto the father of our lozde Iesus Christ: which is father ouer all that is called father in heauen and in earth, that he would graunte you, according to the riches of his gloire, that ye maye bee strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man, that Christe mai dwelle in your hertes by faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in loue, might bee able to comprehend with all sapntes, what is that breadth and length, depth and height: and to knowe the excellēce loue of the knowlege of Christ, that ye might bee fulfilled with all fulnes, whiche cummeth of God. Vnto him I am able to doe exceeding abundantlye aboute al that we aske or thinke, according to the power that worketh in vs, be prayse in I congregation by Christe Iesus: thorowout all generacions from tyme to tyme. Amen.

This secreete counsaile of God, forasmuch as I preache boldly in euery place, I suffer exceeding punishmente, of such, as yet cannot possibly be perswaded of this matter. But I beseeche you, let not myne afflictions, whiche I suffer for your sakes, any thyng disquiete or dismaye you. For there is no cause why you shoulde be ashamed of suche an Apostle, though I bee laden with fetters. For like as the crosse of Christe is our gloire, euen so my fetters, which I weare not for any euill dedes, but for the sacrifice of the Gospell, are for your honestie, and no rebuke. For, the more displeasures we suffer with a constant mynde for the Gospell of Christe, the more entirely we cause the people to beleue, that the promyses of Christe are not vayne, inasmuch as through assured hope of them, we faint not for any displeasures of this life. And it is not Joyous to me ouerly to suffer for the gospelles busynesse, but it also becommeth al men, that are entred vnto Christe, to folowe the example of their aunte and head. And truly for this cause sake, I bowe my knees, and praye earnestlye euen from the bowels of myne harte vnto God our father, and the same, the father of our lozde Iesus Christe, of whome, as the supreme head, dependeth all spirit uall kynded, wherby are incorporated together whether they bee angelles in heauen, or faithfull people vpon earth: and of whome onely, as of the fountaine, springeth what floweth is beloungyng to true felicitie: that like as he hath begonne to declare his

the text.

that he would graunte you according to the riches of his gloire.

which is a part of all.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

an boundaunte glorie in you, so he maye moze and moze augmente his liberall goodnesse to you ward: that as you are engrafted to Christ through baptisme, and as it were bozne newe agayne, so you maye gather courage and strengthe with daylye encrease, not accordyng to the bodye, but accordyng to the mynde and soule, that is to saye, by the gyfte of the spirite of the father, continually increasyng in vs, by whome we are made stronge and valiaunt, to withstande al dyddes of persecution: and that the constancie of your sayth maye be such, that you thynke surelye, that Christe will neuer fayle you, but rather dwelle in wardly in your hertes, for þe saythful trustes sake, wherewith you commit your selues wholly vnto him. for with such is he most specially presente, as discusse theye owne strength and depende wholly of his helpe. And this shall the rather come to passe, yf hauing a Gospellike sayth, you praetyse also a Gospellike charitie, knytynge the one to thother, so as it maye bettelye tesse and take roce in your soules, to þe intent, that being established and grounded vpon this sure foundation, you maye wate greater, and greater in your spirite, and after a certayn wise, be correspondent to the immeasurable spirite of God, that you maye grow and go forward so persitely, that not onelye with the Iewes, but also with the vniuersall multitude of Sayntes, whiche are incorpored to the bodye of Christe, through the beliefe of the Gospel, you maye bee hable to comprehend how infinitely the goodnesse of God extendeth it selfe, and how it is not restrained within narrowe bondes and limittes: in heigth reachyng vp to the angels, in depth pearyng downe to the helles, in length and breadth spreadyng it selfe vnto all coastes of the world: and that you maye bee hable also to vnderstand the inestimable charitie of Christe towarde mankynde, whose knowledg excelleth all the knowledg of man, how excellent so euer it be. And that you may in these gyftes so increase, that as persite and lustye men byes, you maye bee answertably wote for so noble a heade, and so hygh a father. For lyke as the bodye byrth hath degrees of ages, hath his increases, and hath his measure, as long as his growing time endureth, euen so this spiritual generacion also hath his childhoode, hath his springing time, and than his persite lusty growen age. for these thynges (I saye) I praye often vpon my knees vnto God the father, which thynges in dede although they be greate, and far aboue mannes power, yet I desyre them of hym, whose power is so myghty that we cannot possiblye imagine so great a matter, but he is hable to dooe muche greater: and is so good and so gentill, that he dooeth not onelye accomplishe our desyres with his owne liberallitee, but also geueth vs muche moze than we can hope for: And yet there is nothyng in this behalfe dooen other throughe our merites or powers. for we are nothyng elles, but the instrument of the diuine power, that woozeth his owne myghte in vs, so that all glorie, that flourisheth in the congregacion, is wholly to be ascribed to his largesse, through Christ Iesus, by whose participation the congregacion is endowed with so excellent gyftes: and of this glorie there shall bee no ende, but it shall endure through all ages eternally, like as the congregacion of Christe shall also haue none end. That, that I haue sayd, is certayne and vndoubtedly true.

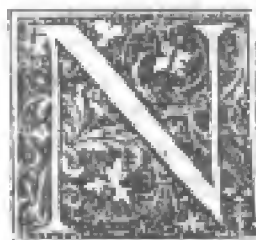
We beeyng
rooted and
grounded
in loue.

myghte bee
hable to com-
prehende

unto hym
that is po-
ble.

The.iii. Chapter.

I Therefore (whiche am a paysoner of the Lordes) exhortē you that ye walke worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with al lowlines and mekenes, with humblynes of mynde, forbearyng one an other thowmēfoul, and be diligēte to kepe the vnitie of the spiritie thowmē the bonde of peace, being one body, and one spiritie, such as ye are called in one hope of your calling. Let there bee but one Lord, one sayth, one baptysme, one God and father of all, whiche is aboue all, and thowmē all, and in you all. The. xxiij.



Now inasmuche as ye perceiue, from how vyle a condicion, vnto what great dignite, from how depe desperation, to what excellentē benefites you are called, I beseeche you for these theines sakes, wherewith I am tyed, not for mine own faultes but for the glozpe of God and your saluacion, that asinuche as remaineth behynde, you would conforme your selues in honest cōuersacion answerably to your professiō, & to the mercifulnes that God hath shewed to you wardes.

And that shalbe doen, in case the excellēcy of your professiō make you not to hēgh minded nor to fearcelly remaked. But see that all the custome of your life resemble in all thynges, true modestye, gentleness and lowlyte of mynde, so that one disdēpne not an other, but euery one suffre other through mutual charitie: rather one bearyng with an others weakenesse for the tyme, than whan euery one goeth about to holde his owne with tōrte and nayle, you breake concordē and vniforme loue, wherewith you are made one and vnted togethet through the bonde of peace. For it is not comenient, that such mennes myndes, shuld be deuided among theselues, that haue so many thynges commune. You are al one bodye, you dependē all of one heade, you haue all receiued of one selfe spiritie of Christ, and you are also indifferently called all vnto one hope of inheritaunce. There is one lord of al Iesus Christ: al haue but one professiō of faith, there is but one baptysme of al, that by the meanes of Christes death is indifferently cōfessē all; vnto all that beleue the Gospell, whether they bee circumcised or vncircumcised. Finallye there is but one God and father of al, that as the pryncē & autour of all thynges, hath dominion ouer vs all in suche sorte, that by his spiritie, wherewith he governeth vs, he geueth hymselfe vnto all, and kepeth continual residence with vs, resting and helpyng vs in all thynges: so that it is the gifte of onely one, what good thyng soeuer we haue.

Unto every one of vs is geuen grace according to the measure of the gifte of Christ. The. xxv.
Wherefore he saith: when he went vp on hye, he led captiue captiue, & gaue graces vnto men. That he ascended, what meaneth it, but that he also descended first into the lowest partes of the earthe: & that descended, is euen the same also that ascended vp, aboue all heauens, to fulfill all thynges. And the verie same made some apostles, some prophetes, some euēgelistes, some shepherdes and teachers: to y edifying of the saintes, to the worke and ministracion, euen to the edifying of the bodye of Christ, till we all come to the vniūte of sayth and knowledge of the sonne of God, vnto a perfect man, vnto the measure of the full perfect age of Christ.

This ought in no wyse to hynder our concordē, that the giftes of God bee not all after one sorte nor all a lyke appēaryng in al menne, no more than we see the members of the body not agre or to be rached one for an other because they be not indifferently apte al to one vse, or fele not al alike the influence of y head. But this maner variēte ought rather to be y occasion of vniūte. For inasmuch as no member of the body is habile fully to vphold himself of himself, it cometh to passe, y

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euery one muste haue neede of an others offyce, so that one maye not contemne an other. But this distribution of gyftes, dependeth not of vs, but of the wyll of God, who distributeth vnto euery man lesse or more as it seemeth expedient in his owne syghte. There is no cause, why he shoulde bee dyspensed, that hath lesse, nor why he shoulde exalte hymselfe, that hath the more. That one is after Goddes measurynge, this other is after Goddes plenteous enlargynge, and all by Christe, which geueth also these thynges equally with the father. Certaynly this is the thyng y^e the Psalmiste by the inspiration of the holy gost spake of so long agoe. For Christe hauyng all ready conquered the helles, is ascended alyue agayne into the hygh kyngdome of the father, and hath carryed with him the ensigne of his conqueste, even the flocke of vs myserable captiues, whom he hath frely deliuered from the tyranny of the deuyl and synne. And from thence, of the fathers liberallitie, he hath geuen throughe the holpe ghoste sundrye kyndes of gyftes, and bestowed them among menne, as it is the solempne manner of suche as wyne the maistrye in a triumph, to thowre downe tokens of triumphe abrode among the people. He sente downe gyftes from heauen, and brauely thynges they were, that he sente. To be briefe, where it is sayed: he ascended, doeth it not consequently folowe, that he before descended. And there is no descencion but from aboue: so that the descencion is before, and the ascencion after. For none deserueth woorthelpe to bee exalted on hygh, but onely throughe lowynesse and humbleyng of hymselfe. To conclude, after moste lowe humbleyng, foloweth moste hygh aduaucing. From the moste hyghe heauen, than the which nothing can be higher, Christe descended himselfe euen vnto the helles, than the which nothing can be lower. And for this cause sake he was woorthily exalted aboue the highesse of all the heauens, and so took his bodily presence out of oure syghte, to the intente to accomplishe all thynges from aboue with heauently gyftes, and after an other manner of reason, to be so much more effectually presente with vs, than when he was conuersant among vs vpon earth. He forsoke not his body, but deuyled his gyftes vnto euery of his members, after suche wyse, as none of them all shoulde want anye thyng, albeit some were endued with more excellent gyftes than some. For some he would haue to be chief, as Apostles, ryng leaders & autours of the Gospel preahing, & some to be prophetes that coulde expounde the hidde meanynges of Moses lawe, some to be euangelistes to occupye the Apostles rouines, and to carrie aboute the gospell from place to place. And some to be pastours and doctours, as byshoppes, to fede the flocke of Christe, with the meate of holy doctryne, and holle example of good lyfe. And the reste he instructed, some with one gyfte and some with an other, to the intente, that of all these conferred together, the compaignie of sayntes shoulde bee perfectely consummate and furnyshed, to the vse of euery good offyce: and that the perfect bodye of Christe beyng fully growen together in all his members, shoulde so bee cherished one with the succour of an other, and that the stronger member shoulde beare for the same with the weaker, and the weaker make and folowe the example of the stronger, vntill we maye all at length cumme to equall strength of fayth, and with lyke perfection knowe the soune of God, throughe whose helpe we maye wate bygge and lyste in the secreete encrease of mynde, after such sorte, that at length we may growe vnto a perfect manne, and accordyng to oure measure, frame our selues un-

worthily

Answerably to our most profite head: In whome was neither subtilitye, nor counteneyther yet any defaulte.

That we henceforth should be no more children, waucering & caried about with every wind of doctrine, by the wylkes of men thowse craftynes, whereby they lase awaye for vs, to doctrine vs. But let vs followe the reuerch in loue, and in all thynges growe in hym, whiche is the head, euen Christ, in whome of all the bodye he is coupled, and knitt together thowse haire every ioynt, wherewith one member to an other, according to the operation as euery part hath his measure) he encreaseth the bodye into the chesping of a felix thowse loue.

There is an age of the bodye, that geureth full strength to all the members, and putteth awaye the tendernes of chyldhood. And in sembla. ble wyse unto this, there is a lyke proceeding in the orde of godlinesse, wherunto we ought all to geue diligent endeour, that we be not from hencefoorth, as we haue been, waucering lyke children, in vncertaine opinions, not addicted to any certayne decrees to attayne saluacion, but as men boyde of truely, carryed about no waye to this, now into that iudgement with euery wynde of doctrine: submytting our selues (as it were plebe chylde) to the subtilitye and craft of some certayne men, whiche crauyle not to teache vs Christ sincerely, but to cathe vs through theyr subtil arttes, and to snare vs with their craftie deceates, or with philosophical reasons to byng vs in doubte of those thynges, which by faith ought in no wise to be doubted of: or elles in steede of the Gospelles veritye to see before vs the shadowes of Moyses labor. But now we hauing once embraced the veritye of the Gospel, lette vs rather lope into it sincere charitable loue towards al men, enforcing our continuall studye to this ende, that we maye profite not onely in the knowledg of the truely, but also in the continual diligence tookes of charitie, so as all we being members maye be answerably like unto our head. And truly Christ is our head, who also is the truely selfe, and hath so loued vs, that he hath geuen hymselfe to make vs safe. To this head, it is requisite, that the members be agreeable: Inasmuche as from hym, the spirite of lyfe floweth into all the whole bodye, being compacte and set together of sondrye members ioyned othwys one to an other, and pearyng throughe euery ioynt of the lymmes, which coulde not be, excepte the partes of the bodye were ioyned agreeably one to an other, that lyfe maye haue passage into the from one membre to an other. For the hande or the foot beinge cutte of, cannot possibly haue any parte of the vertue, that cometh from the toppe of the heade: But forasmuche as the whole bodye is perfectly conglutinate in it self, it cometh to passe, that the spirite of Christ practiseth his efficacie in euery membre, according to their severall capacite and orde: and forasmuche as all the members studye through mutuall loue to profite euery one other, the whole bodye waxeth bygger and bygger, and is made lustye and stronge, so as it wyll not geue place in any condicion to the wyndes of false opinions, alluring this waye and that waye, to byng it out of the truely.

This I sape therefore, and testifie thowme the Lord, that ye henceforth walke not as other Gentiles walke, in banitie of theyr minde, while they are blinded in their vnderstanding, beinge farre from a godly lyfe, by the meanes of the ignorantie that is in the, and because of the blindness of their hartes: whiche beinge paste repentance haue geuen themselves ouer into wantonnes, to worke all manner of uncleannes, euen with greedines. But ye haue not so learned Christ. It is to be that ye haue hearde of hym, and haue bene taught in hym, as the truely is in Iesus: as concerning the conuersation in time past, ye saie from you that olde men, whiche is corrupte, according to the reasonable iudges.

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Now of all these matters, that I haue gone about to open vnto you, with so many similitudes, this is the whole Summe. I do not onely monish but also beseege and beseech you for the lorde Iesus sake, vnto whom you are indebted for your saluation, that as soone as you are once incorporated vnto hym, frame your selues lyke vnto hym, not onely in the sinceritie of faith, and veritie of doctrine, but also in vpryghte integritie of lyfe. When you were of the number of the gentyles, you were answerable lyke vnto theyr condition. But now you are become other men and regenerate into Christe, it becommeth you also to be of other maners. The gentyles, forasmuche as they haue not receiued the truth of the Gospel, are leaue with vaine opinions, woozshipping dumme Images in the steade of God, and measuring theyr felicitie after the temporal commodities of this worlde. And the cause why they woozshippe dead wares, and cruise in transitorye thynges is, that they haue no knowledge of the true eternal lyfe, which is God. And forasmuche as he cannot be seene, but onely with the scourdyngs of the soule, for that cause he is not seene of them, whose hart is obscured, yea rather blinded, with the darkenes of naughty lusts, and cloudes of infidelitie. And being geuen ouer to theyr owne naughtines, are growen at length to so high mischance, that as men out of hope to returne to amendment, and as those that fele not theyr owne vile miserie, reue heablong into all kindes of abomination and insatiable lustes, to dooe all thyng that fylthy is, then so ferre, that it were shame also to speake of. But the doctrine of the Gospel is ferre differente from such kindes of maner. For of it you haue not learned folowe humayne opinions, but Christe hymselfe, the fountayne and example of all Innocencie, in case you haue truly herd him speake inwardly. & are truly taught by his spirite, that you to your powres maye diligently folowe those thynges that were trulye in Iesu, that is to wete, lyke as he was veretie wyse of all synne, and now hauyng conquered death, dwelleth in the glorie of Immortalitie, euen so you being also regenerate vnto hym, put of the old man that representeth the fyrste originall poyson afresh through naughty benemous lusts,

The terte. To be renewed also in the spirite of your mynde, and to put on that newe man, which after God is Quene in righteousness and true holmes. Wherefore put awaye lying, and speake euery man truth vnto his neighbour, for as muche as we are members one of another. Be angry, and spurre not let not the sunne go downe vpon your wrath, neyther geue place vnto the backbiter. Let hym that stole, steale no more, but let hym that hath laboured with his handes the thing which is good, that he maye geue vnto hym that needeth.

Forasmuche as you are engrafted vnto the newe man Christe, throughte baptism, bee you also renewed with hym, not after the bodye, but after the mynde wherein the spirite of Christe dooeth moste chieflie woork: and laying awaye the maner of your olde cankered lyfe, put on the newe man, which was made after a certayne spirituall sorte lately in you by the woorkmanshippe of God, yea made, as it were, by a certayne transmutation, that wrighteousnes being abolished, Innocencie shoulde succede, and the dulcenesse of humayne lustes being taken oute of the waye, the holynesse of the Gospelles heritie shoulde take place. Loke therefore that you folowe that holynesse in euery condition, and see you deceaue not one an other with countrefaite speache nor lying, but that euery one consider with himselfe the thyng, that true is, & deale truly with his neyghbour.

bour, remēbyng that inasmuche as we are al members of one bodye, no man can hurte an other, but he muste needs also hurte hymselfe. It is a great perfection not to be moued with angre, but in case through the frailtie of mannes nature any rage of angre come in your minde, remēbyr (as the holy psalmographe getteth warning) so to restrayn your angre, whan it would burst out, & it bryake nor out into scolding, or iniurie, or malicious harted. And letre not your angre be onely unhurtfull, but also let it remaine so litle whyle with you, that it bee sooner out of your stomakes, than the smoke from besydes the earth: Iste whatt the earth in the night season is naturally colde, you contrarie wise chaunge youre selfes in the meane tyme hoote wylth angre. There is nothyng but concord & is habile to defende you safelye agaynst the assaults of the deuyl, and yf it bee broken through malice and displeasures one agaynst another, you open a waye here for your enemye to bryake in to your better destruction. Where as concord is, the deuyl is feble, and where discorde is, there is he myghtye, so that yf you geue place to malice, you must perforce geue place also to hym. He that after the olde naughty facion of spuyng to bled and polleth others, nott let hym absteyne not onely from other mennys goodes, but also geue a waye liberallye of hys owne. And if he haue not to dooe with all, let hym not disdayne to get wylth his honeste hande labours, wherewith to succoure suche as be nedye.

Let no fylthy communication procede out of your mouth: but that which is good to edifye withall, as our as nebe is that it maye multiplye gent into the hearers. And geue not ye the holy spirit of God by whom ye are sealed unto the daye of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath & warke and cospynge and curst speaking be put awaye from you, with all maliciousnes. Be ye courteous one to another, mercifull, forguyng one another, such as God in Christes sake hath forgiven you. The text;

It is not ynoughe to kepe still the handes coumente, excepte the tongue be also unhurtfull. Many pestilent mischeafes a naughty tongue is woont to occasi on: wylth filthy communicacion it infecteth, wylth backebiting it infameth, wylth false accusacion it destroyeth, wylth lying and percurie it deceaueth. Let no rill communicacion therefore procede out of your mouthe. For such as the speache is, such is the minde, yf you be of a pure mynde, it becometh not impure communica tion to procede out of it. And it is not ynoughe for a Chyrtian mannes com munication to be unhurtfull, but it ought also to bee of suche wyse, that it bee spoken in season, and to so good purpose as it maye bee commodious unto the hearers. But in case you doe otherwyse, you shall not onely offende menne wylth vnprofitable, vnseasonable, and noysome communication, but also the holy spirite of God, that dwelleth in Chyrtian hartes, by whome youre soules and bodies are, as it were, marked vnto God. And it is furthermoze conueni ent for you, to byng forth that marke safe and saye in that daye, whan you shall receyue the rewarde of youre Innocēcy, at whiche daye you shal bee dysseuered from the compaignye of the deuyl. And twelue thynges sppeite is dyspleased with all kynde of vnclannesse, and canne not abyde to haue a dooe wylth wrath, wylth reuengement, nor wylth filthy com munication, he is peaceable, gentyll and bounteous, and yf you haue truely receyued hym, let al bitterness, swelling and feartenes be sette from your conuersa tion. Let angre, loude speaking, and scolding be so fet from you, & no leaue of

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of malice remayne in youre stomake, wherof these manner of myslikes are doone to budde out. But rather bee you tractable and gentle among youre selues, readye to haue mercie, to pardone and to forgiue every one other, yf any thyng chaunce to bee doone anywise through errorre and mannes inbecillitie: to forgiue (I saye) for Christes sake, forasmuch as God hath forgiuen you your offences by Christe once for al, howbeit the lord hath forgiuen his seruantes vpon this condicion, that after his example, we should also every one forgiue oure felow seruantes. For concord can not possibly in any wyse continue among men, vnles they can beate patiently every mā with the faultes of others.

The .v. Chapter.

The xix. Be ye therefore folowers of God as here christe, and walke ye in loue such as Christ loued vs, and gaue hymselfe for vs an offering and a sacrifice of a sweete sauer to God. As for (continacion and al vnderstande, or courteousnes, let it not be once named among you, as it becommeth sayntes, or filthynesse or tooldie talkyng, or chynge, which are not comely but rather greuyng of thanks. For this ye knowe that no behynderer, or other badde persone, or courteous persone (whiche is a worshipper of ymagines) hath any inheritance in the kyngdome of Christe and of God. Let no man betraye you with bayne wordes. For because of suche thynges cometh the wrath of God, vpon the chylde of disobedience. Be not ye therfore companions of them. Ye were summe darkness but nowe are ye lycht in the Lord. Walke as children of lycht. For the fruite of the spirite consisteth in al goodnes and myghtynesse and trust. Accepte that which is pleasing vnto the Lord.



Than forasmuche as by the holy goste you are the children of God, see that you bee lyke your father in holynes of lyfe, that you maye worthyly bee loued of hym for ever. For eternely thus shal he shewe hys loue to wardes you perpetuallye, yf you shewe we loue among youre selues one vnto another. And howe aboundantly greates the fathers loue was to wardes vs, it appeareth playnely by hys sonne, who loued vs so entirclye muche, that not onely he hath freely pardoned al our synnes, but also offered himselfe vnto death vpon the crosse, to thintente, where God the father was before dyspleased and angered with vs, he should by meane of this sacrifice and offering of good sauour that smelleth swete in his presence, become louyng and mercifull vnto vs. This louyng charitie in case we folowe, as it becommeth vs to doe, we shal not onely be tractable yf any thyng shall chaunce to be committed agaynst vs, but also we shal not dye, if occasion so requyre, for the commoditie of our neighbour to putte our lyues in daunger. But nowe to what purpose neede we to speake earnestly vnto you, touchyng suche vyces, as be to filthye and to grosse, as whooredome and al kinde of vncleanes, and insatiable desyre of money: from the which monstrous abominacions, a Christian mannes conuersacion ought to be so ferre alienate, þ it were shame to haue the once spoken of among the. For there be some thynges so execrable, that an honest pure harte woulde euen abhorre once to thinke of the. And it becometh sayntes, to be not only of honest cleane conuersacion, but also to bee chaste mouthed and of pure communicacion. And we may not thinke it ynoughe, to be pure of wordes and cleane of lyfe only, excepte we abhorre also to talke of foolishe frivulous fables, and bayne flirtes and iesters, whiche

whiche as in other they maye be tolerated or commended, so truly in Christi-
ans they are nothyng fitt nor congruente. For Christians in theyr moſte
ſpedye Journaye to heauen, haue continuall batayle with byces, and ſo daun-
gerous battayle, that they canne haue no layſure to applye ſuche trybles and
ſportes, but rather they haue to wepe. And when the mynde woulde make
merye, becauſe of good ſucceſſe and well ſpedyng, it oughte to make merye in
hymnes and thankes geuyng to God. Howebeit I knowe well ynough, there
be philoſophers, that teache Carnal copulation out of marriage to be no ſinne,
becauſe it is not puniſhed by mannes lawe. And that couetous deſyre of money
is no faulte, becauſe there is no temporall payne appoynted vnto it. But I
woulde haue you vnderſtande for a certayntye, that whoſoener is an whores
monger, or ſpotted with any kynde of vncleane liſtes, or geuen to Couetouſnes
(whiche, ſo far as muche as he repoſeth his principal felicitie in dunne transitorie
ſubſtance, is reckoned liſel better than a woodſhipper of Images) ſhal not be
admitted into the inheritaunce of Immortal lyfe, that God hath promiſed his
to inherite commonly with Chriſt. And if you thinke that this paine is but light,
than geue credence to them, that goe aboute to perſwade vnto you, that thoſe
ſynnes are but lyght. Suffer not your ſelues to be deceyued wyth ſuche maner
of bayne-ſtrifolous communicacion, but take hede rather to the doctryne of the
Goſpell, ſeyng that for ſuche maner of ſynnes, althoughe they be not puniſhed
wyth mannes lawe, yet the vengeance of God commonly falleth vpon the chil-
dren of diſobedience, for diſtruſting the promyſſes of the heavenly father, and re-
poſyng theyr felicitie in ſuche kynde of thinges. Once you diſtorced your ſelves
from ſuche mennes company, and profreſſed Chriſt. It ſtandeth you therfore in
hande to beware, that your conuerſacion be not lyke vnto the naughynelle of
them, that profeſſe one waye and lyue ſette wyde an other waye. The darkenes
of Ignorauce hath bene yet hitherto the occaſion of erroure: And the trueth of
the Goſpel is ſprongen bp and wypped awaye all darkenes. And you in tymes
paſte, walked as in the darke night, and committed the ſhameful byces that are
doen in the night. But now we God by the lyghte of the Goſpel, hath cullumined
your hartes, that you maye cleerlye deſcerne, howe a bonnible the thynges are
now, that beſore appeared to be pleaſaunt & ſweete. The nighte hath no ſhame
and couereth many thynges, that no man woulde bee bolde to doo in the cleere
day. Therfore ſee you orde your conuerſacion alltogether after ſuche ſort, as
you forgette not to conſider, that you lyue in the daye, and are alwayes ſene
to the eyes of God. He that taketh a Journaye in the night, many tymes ſton-
neth, becauſe he ſerth not, where he ſhoulde goe by. And the daye on the other
parte hath this commoditie: it ſheweth what is to be folowed, and what is to
be avoyded. For it teacheth vs in euery condicion to ſee from malice, curſed
ſpeaking and diſſimulation, and in ſtede of them to folowe goodneſſe, righte-
ouſneſſe, and trueth: and generallye to marke that thyng alwayes, not that is
pleaſyng vnto me, nor y is ſweete or delectable vnto vs, but y which is accepta-
table vnto the will of god, after whoſe appointmēt our conuerſacion ought alto-
gether to be governed.

And haue no ſelowſhip with the unfruitful wothes of darkenes but rather rebuke them.
For it is ſhame euen to name thoſe thinges whiche are doen of the in tetter: but all thinges
when they are rebuked of the lighte are manifeſt. For whatſoever is manifeſt, the ſame
is light. Wherefore he ſaith: awake thou that ſleepeſt, and riſe up from dead, and Chriſt
ſhall geue the lighte.

The text,

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Christe is the fountayne of our daylyght: and yf you wyl continuallye cleane vnto hym, your endeour shal be to doe fructefull house officers of godhede, and suche as be worthy of the lycht: and from henceforth be ashamed to haue a doe with the vnfuctefull woorkes of darkenesse. Now therfore take so good hede, that you slide not agayne into your olde former darkenesse, that you may rather with your lycht bewray and reprove those naughty dedes, that they commit in theyr darkenes. For whā they are not afraied to offend God, as oft as the night or secreete place hath take a way shame, the thynges that they do than, are so abominable, that it were very shame euen once to make reheral of them. But as long as they offende, while no lycht appeareth, they offendelicenciously without punishment. But as often as they are bewrayed with the open light, than the bilenesse of the thyng begynneth to bee knowen, and the faultes so bewrayed, are amended and turned into better: that is to wete, when the nyght is turned into the daye, and the byndenesse of harte vnterly expelled. And yf your conuersacion be light, they shal be ashamed of theyr owne filthynes, when they see your Innocencie. And than it shall come to passe, that beeyng moued through your honeste godlye demerour, they shall bee spized vp to Innocencie, yf they see the lycht of Christe shynnyng in you. For in dede thus sayeth the prophete. Wake thou that sleapest, and ryls vp from the deade, and Christe shall geue the lycht. It is a very deade sleape, yea rather death it selfe, to bee ouerwhelmed with the pleasures of this woorld, and not to respecte the thynges that are eternall and vnfynedly good. And yet they cannot other wyse awake nor by any other meanes returne to lyfe, oulesse Christe spring into theyr hartes and wype away the grosse darkenesse of ignorance.

Take hede therfore how ye walke circumspectly: not as vnhylt, but as wise men: auoyding occasion, because the dayes are euill. Wherefore, be ye not vnhylt, but vnderstand what the wyll of the Lord is, and be not benthe with vyce, wherein is excess: but be fylled with the wyrt, speakinge vnto your selues, in psalmes and hymnes, and spiritual songes, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hartes, geuyng thanks alwayes for all thynges vnto God the father, in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ, submitting your selues one to another in the feare of God.

Therefore you of the Ephesiāns, vnto whome Christe, our dayght sunne, geueth hys clere lycht, take hede and loke about you, how and after what maner you walke, not leadyng your lyfe nowe after the maner of the gentyles, which through byndenesse of harte perceyue not what is honest, but as it becommeth them, that vnderstande not the doctryne of the Gospell, and with losse of all you haue, receiue this oportunitie to obreyne saluacion: whiche the more gredeyle is to be layed holden vpon, yf this tyme is so periously naughty, and many thynges now be in on eueryside, that are habile to withdraue circumspect men from the sinceritie of Christian doctryne. Therefore it standeth you in hand to take the more circumspecte hede, that through vnabussidnesse you geue not occasion vnto the wicked, yf rather they make be open aduersaries to the Gospel, or elles draue you backe from your profession. This is the whole Summe of your saluacion, and in this behalfe you ought to be watery wyse, to wyke at other thynges, and to declare that you vnderstande perfectly what the lordes wyll is. For his desire is to haue al men brought to the saluacion of the Gospel, if it were possible. And it shall be requisite for such as take that busynesse in hand, to bee sobre. For drunkenhipe is hartelisse, and vncircumspecte, and not onclie hartelisse, but also rashe and timoracions.

Therefore

Therefore be in no wyse dronken with wyne, which is a thyng vnnecessarie, and prouoketh lasciuiousnes: but be you filled with the sweete boyne of the holy ghost. For that is a fortunate ebullient, that can stirre vs, not to want on dainties, rynges or folyshe ballettes, wherewith the gentiles crie vpon theyr deuilles: but vnto psalmes, and hymnes, and spirituall songes, wherewith to reioyce, and syng, and make merre amonge your selues vnto the lord: not with vncomely pelling noyses, as madde dronken men are vsed to doo, but in warbelye in your soules and in your heertes. This is a pleasure, this is a loue, this is a banquette woorthye of Christians, lest they shoulde excorde the gentiles in dronken banquettynges. After theyr dronken pastimes, so doo dooeth ensue, and many tymes also disease of bodye. But your myrth is a continuall mermente. For whatsoeuer chaunceth vnto you, whether it bee gladnesse or whether it bee sadnesse (gladnesse from our mercifull God, sadnesse from hym that labourerth for your saluacion) you are bounden alwayes to geue thanks for all thynges, being assured, that nothyng can happen, but to the beste auantage of your eternall felicitie. But the thanks are to bee geuen vnto God, the author of al good thynges to almenne: and the same is also the father and God of our lord Iesus Christe, by whome he geueth vs all thynges, and hym he wyll haue praysed in all thynges equally wth himselfe. Christ hath submitted himselfe obediēty vnto his father, and in lyke case it becommeth vs to submitte our selues vnto hym, not that it becometh a Christian to be a terrour vnto a Christian, but those that reuerently folow Christ, as apperteyneth, do not grudge to submit themselves euery one to other, inasmuch as he, being the supreme head of al, hath submitted himselfe humbly vnder al. Let the inferiour acknowledge the auctoritie of the superior. And on the other syde, let the superior conserue hymself vnto his capacity of the inferiour: so as he rather he may do hym good. For he is among Christians beareth mooste rule, ruleth to none other ende, but to do the most good he can.

Ye women, submitte your selues vnto your owne housebandes, as vnto the Lord, for the housebande is the wyues head, euen as Christ is the head of the congregacion: and the same is he that ministrerth saluacion vnto the bodye. Therefore, as the congregacion is in subiection to Christe, likewise let the wyues also be in subiection to theyr housebandes in all thynges. Ye housebandes, loue your wyues, euen as Christe also loued the congregacion, and gaue himselfe for it, to sanctifie it, and cleanse it in the fonteyne of water throughte the woorde, to make it vnto hymselfe a glorious congregacion, withoute spot or wrinkle, or alye suche thyng: but that it shoulde be holpe, and withoute blame. So ought men to loue their wyues, as theyr owne bodyes. He that loueth his wyfe, loueth hymselfe, for no manne euer yet hated his owne fleisch: but neuer theles and cheriseth it, euen as the Lord dooeth the congregacion. For we are members of his bodye, of his fleisch, & of his bones, for this cause that a man leaue father & mother, & haue ioyned vnto his wife, and of two shalbe made one fleisch. This is a great secret, but I speake of Christ & of the congregacion. Nevertheless, dooe ye so, that euery one loue his wife euen as himselfe: And lette the wyfe feare her husbande.

Let the wyues therefore acknowledge the auctoritie of theyr housebandes, and be in subiection vnto them, none other wyse, than the congregacion is in subiection to the Lord Iesu. For lyke as Christe is the heade of the congregacion, euen so is euery houseband the head of his owne wife. Nevertheless like as Christe hath preeminence ouer the bodye, to the entent the health of the body shoulde depende of it: euen so is the housebande in auctoritie ouer the wyfe, not to thynge to vse her cruelly like a tyranne, but to provide for her wealth, because hyr wyffe is more substantiall than hers. And yet the wyfe maye not hynde against her housebande, because he seeketh at her handes to bee more loued than feared.

But

The text

The houseband is the wyues head euen as Christe is head of the congregacion

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

Ye house-
holders loue
your wiues
as Christ al-
so hath lo-
ued the con-
gregation.

But her duty is to be so much more in subiection in al pointes, like as þe congrega-
tion is so much þe more in subiection vnto Christ, as he hath more lowly inbe-
mitted himselfe for the saluacion of her his spouse. And on the other parte, you þe
householders, a buse not your autogitie lyke tyrannes ouer your wiues, but ras-
ther vse them with like louyng charitie, as Christ hath and doeth loue his con-
gregation, whome beynge an aduouterer and an obstinate rebel, he did not once
lyn not caste of, but also gaue hymselfe vnto deathe, for the redemyng of her sala-
uacion: and so of a defiled one he made her pure and holpe, and where she was
uncleane and foule, he made her saye and goodlye: and yet caste her not in the
teeth with her vile filthynesse, but washed her cleane with the streame of his
owne blood, and scoured her in the fountaine of lyfe that worketh profitably by
the invocacion of the name of God, so as through his owne diligent goodnes
he myght prepare for hymselfe a glorious wife, even the congregation: whiche
nowe should neyther haue spotte nor wrinde, nor any luche lyke, that might be
displeasunt in the housebandes eye, but in every point both saye and faultles.
And so it becommeth the housebandes to be lykewise affected towards theyr
wiues, that they leaue nothing vpon one, wherby they maye make theyr wiues
perfitte Christian woomen, and to bee no lesse careful for their wyues health,
than the head is careful for the health of the bodye. For the wyfe is the house-
bandes bodye. Admitte thy wyfe be of crooked condicions, or a nyce wanton, or
geuen to ocher vnrhyfynesse: destroye her not with ragyng crueltie, but heale
her and amende her with sobre lenitie. Correcte the faulces, so as thou loue thy
wyfe neuerthelesse for all that. For what would the head doe, yf it see his bodye
be full of sickness or disease: would it beginne to hate it, and forsake it: or rather
heale it, if it coulde, and if it coulde by no meanes heale it, yet at least beare with
it, and cherishe it. Might it not be thought a great absurditie, if the head would
with the euill to his owne bodye. He that loueth his wyfe, loueth hymselfe, for she
is parte of hymselfe: what man had euer so litle feluyng of the senses of nature, to
hate his owne bodye. What man doorth not rather nourishe and cherishe his
bodye, what a manner a que so currit hee, to make it better and lustier. Seyng
that the very Ethioikes doe naturally no lesse than so, why doorth not Christian
charitie worke the same in vs a great deale more, inasmuche as we are moued
thereunto by the examplar of Christe, who did not forsake his wyfe the congrega-
tion (though she was defeyned before tyme, in many sondry wayes, and a very
whorische naughty packe) but he clensed her, he pyked her, and made her perfect-
ly trimme in every poynt. Therefore, you housebandes doe the same vnto your
wyues, that Christe hath dooen vnto vs, that are the members of his bodye,
whiche is the congregation, lyke as the wyfe is the bodye of the housebande, of
whose flethe and bones she is made, to thynnterit maye be manifestlye knowen,
that that thyng oughte in no wyfe to bee diuorced asondye that is all one selfe
same thyng. For thus we reade in the booke of Genesis. For the wyues sake,
man shal rather forsake father and mother, than forsake his wyfe: vnto whom
he shall so kepe hymselfe, that of twoo there bee made one, in moste perfite cou-
pling together both of bodies and soules. Nexte after God, we are most bounden
to father and mother, yet the wyfe is preferred a boue them. Herin is ment
a certain vnspokeable great misterie, howe that the thyng that was doon in A-
dam & Eue vnder a figure, should be perfoymed in effect mystically in Christ and
in the

Be that
loueth his
wyfe loueth
himselfe.

in the congregation. This inseparable coniunction, whosoeuer wil wel weigh, shall perceiue that there lyeth hidde a great mystery. For lyke as Christ is one with the father, euen so would he haue all his to be al one with him. And albeit this mystery imposterh greater circumstance, than can be now presently expressed, yet it is enough to haue applyed the example to this ende, that euery man should loue his wife, none other wise than he loueth himselfe: and confidre that both he and she are al one selfesame thing, euen as Christ loued his congregation whom he vnited entirely to himselfe. Finally it shall be the wyues parte, not only to loue her husband agayn, as her companion to liue together, but also reuerence him, for the autoritie sake that he hath ouer her. And than shall haue long continue long together goodly, in case both parties doe theys duties accordingly.

¶ The vi. Chapter.

Children, obey your fathers and mothers in the Lord: for that is right. Honour thy father and mother, (the same is the first commaundment in the promys) that thou mayest prosper, and live long on the earth. Ye fathers moue not your children to wrath: but ye shall bring them vp through the nurture and instruction of the Lord. Ye seruantes bee obedient vnto them that are your bodily masters, with feare and trembling, euen with the singleness of your heart, as vnto Christ: not dooing service vnto the eye, as they that go about to please men: but as the seruantes of Christ, dooing the will of God from the heart with good will, fearing the Lords not man. Knowing this, that whatsoeuer good thing any manne dooth, the same shall he receiue agayne of God, whether he be bond or free. And ye masters doe euen thesame thynges vnto them, putting away threatnings: knowing, that your master also is in heauen, neither is there any respect of person with hym.

The text.



Et autoritie be governed by charitie, that in any wyse it practise no tyrannie. And on the other side, let reuerent feare holde vnder the lower soot, so as through to much sufferance they waxe not rebellious. For there can no con corde nor quietnes possibly be, where all is hawke without ordre.ouer the wyfe the husband onely hath autoritie. But the children are bounden to acknowledge the autoritie both of father and mother. Therefore according to this rule, you children be courteous and obe-

dient vnto your father and mother at al theys honeste Christian commaundementes. For this doeth euen the equitie of nature also require, that we shoulde honour them to whome we are bounden for bringing vs in to the worlde: and be kinde vnto the, by whose goodnes, we are nourished and brought vp. And to be brieue, the very lawe of god commaundeth the same, and sayeth: honour thy father & thy mother. And it was not enough to geue that commaundement, as it doth in the other commaundementes. Thou shalt doe no murder. Thou shalt not steale, &c. But he added also a reward vnto it, to allure them the rather to doe theys dutie: although those thynges that are honest, ought to be dooen freely without rewarde. But what rewarde doeth the scripture promise? That it may happen wel vnto the, sayth it, and that thou mayest be long lined vpon earth. Verely it is to be thought, that persone not to be worthy of long life, that is belynde and rebellious agaynst them, by whome he hath receiued the ble of his life. On the other part, you fathers abuse not your autoritie, & the obedience of your children, thinking that you may lawfully do to the what you list.

¶ C. l. They

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

We certainly
can be ob-
noxious to you,
but help me,
Dad, etc.

1999

selues in such wise, as the y may appeare, to count rather to be loued then feared, and to be hartely louing vnto theyr bond seruantes, inasmuch as they be receiued into the felowship of brethren: and not alwayes ready to threate and to beate, as the common sorte of maisters is accustomed to doe. Let your seruantes perceiue, that you are become the more gentle by reason of the Gospel, so as they also may the rather be allured vnto that professiō as wel as you, if peradventure they haue not yet alreby professed: and confidre, that maisters auaritie is but a temporall thing and onely established by mans lawe: And for all that it becummeth not vs in any wise to disturbe it: yet neuertheles there is no respect of persons with god. For he maketh neuer a whit the lesse of any mā because he is a bonde seruante, nor maketh the more of any manne, because he is a gentleman borne. Accozding to mans labors, you maisters haue power ouer your seruantes vpon earth, but for all that in the meane tyme you haue a maister in heauen as well as they. And hys will is, that you care for youre seruantes commoditie, thzough reasonable commaunding, and not to presse the with tirannie. These thynges that we haue hitherto treated of, tend to this end, that you should aswel be lyke vnto your head Christ in holines of life, as to agree together among your selues in mutuall concoyde.

Finally my brethren, be stronge through the Lord and through the power of his might. The text.
 Put on all the armour of God, that ye maye stande against the assaultes of the deuill. For we wrestle not against bloode and flesh: but against rule, against power, against worldly rulers, such gouernours of the darkenes of this worlde, against spirituall craftines in heauy thynges. Wherefore take vnto you the whole armour of God, that ye maye be hable to resist in the euill daye, and stande perfect in all thynges. Stande therefore, and your loynes gird wth the truth, hauing on the breastplate of righteousness, and hauing shoes on your feete, that ye maye bee prepared for the Gospel of peace. About all, take to you the Quicke of faith, whereby ye maye quench all the fierie barres of the tyled. And take the helmet of saluation, and the sword of the spirit, whiche is the word of God.

Now to this remayneth for a finall conclusyon, that forasmuche as the wicked doe lay sundry engines to overthrowe your tranquillitie, you must also bee armed with a strong lustie inward conscience to resist them, not with the ayde of your owne powers, but by the meane of the lord Iesus your defendour, who will not suffer hys bodye to be destitute. Verely as for vs, we are feeble men: but he is valciant and mightie, that hath taken vpon him to be our protectour. Desyre therefore of him all maner of spirituall armour and weapons, that therewith being in euery poynt surely harnessed, you may be hable to stand valciantly agaynst the assaultes of the deuill. For we haue not warre and battayl with men, whose wronges our duetie is to overcome with pacyence. But our battayl is with wicked spirites, the enemyes and foes of Christe, whose champions and instrumentes those are, that ragingly assault vs. And by their iniurie the princes and powers of deuils geue battail agaynst vs fro aboue, and exercise theyr tyranny vpon suche as bee addycted vnto them thzough the naughtinesse of thys worlde, and lay wayte in the darkenes of this worlde for those that loue the lyght of the Gospel. Agaynst those (I say) we must necessarily abyde battayll, and they are not onely mightye of strength, but also exceedingly perfite in spirituall pollicie, and that in the coastes of the ayre, so as they may the easelie come vpon vs, and so as it is the harder for vs to apprehende them.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

them. To warre agaynst this kinde of enemies, no humane weapons nor armour can doe any good. But it is the onely armour of God that must defende vs from harme. Therefore as often as you must entre battayl with your aduersaries, doe alwayes, as noble warriors are accustomed, whan they haue a doe with a daungerous enemy. Set on all your harness, and doe euery thyng accordyngly, that whan the daunger of the battayl shal be, you may be hable to kepe your place, and stedfastly stand vpon the sure rocke Christ. Sohan menne got to warre one agaynst an other, ffirste they couer themselves on euery syde, that they lye not open any way to the enemyes ordinance. Than they make ready to beate backe the invader. The middle partes of theyr bodies, because of the tendernes, they gird with an Apron of maile. The vpper partes they harness with a brest plate. Vpon the legges and feete they weare bootes, and an helmer vpon the head. Than on the lefte syde a shyld is buckled, to kepe of all arowe shot. And so in like case, you that haue spiritual battayl, with wicked spirites continually, in steede of the girdle, put on truerh to girdle vp the loines of your mynde, so as you stande vpryghte and shyne not at any naughtie enticement of faile goodes and false opinions. For the breste plate, put on innocencie and righteousnes, to kepe the inward partes of your mynd safe and sure with the mayles of vertue and godlines. For bootes to put on the legges and feete, loke you haue a sincere affection that couereth after nothing, but such things as be heauently, and is ascrapde of nothyng but onely of ungodlines: so as you may be alwayes readily prepared to defende the Gospel, whose defence consisteth not in styryng of tumulte but in patience and quietnesse. And for that cause sake it is called the gospel of peace. The preachers wherof, the prophete in times past respecting, was in an admiration to considre how excellently saye their feete were. But we must diligently see þ we haue in continual readinesse on euery syde, þ buckeler of faythe, wherby we may assuredly trust to all the promyses of God. What lacum so euer happeneth, with this buckeler it shal be baynquished: what fyre dartes so euer our subtyll aduersary shal throwe at vs, this buckeler shal kepe them of, so as none of them shal pearce any parte of oure lively members. For what thing can wounde the soule, that desierth deatch it selfe. And if you haue also with this buckler, the helmer of a vigilant mynde, that can take good circumspect hede, you neede not in any wise to be afraid of your health. Finally, haue alwaies in your right hand the sword of the spirite, aswel to cut of naughtie lustes from your mindes, and to pearce to the inwarde partes of the harte, as also to kepe of the resistours of the gospels veritie, and to suppress falsehead, that truth may preyayle. This sword is the worde of God, that pearceth with a constant power of fayth, not after the maner of mannes cutting reason, but rather renneth through than cutteth. For the woorde of man is but a weake boattishe woorde, soasmuche as it treateth onely of vayne transitoire matters: But the woorde of god is effectual, and can shal of nothing but of heauently things, and pearceth through vnto the ioyntes of the soule, and searcheth euen to the inwarde boones and marke. These be the enemies that Christians haue battail withal, wheras with men they are at peace: And these are the weapons wherewith they defend themselves and get the victorie, not with their own powers, but by the helpe of Christ the mightie Caprayn, through whose luckie ayde theyr batayl hath good successe.

And praye alwaye with all manner of prayer and supplication in the spirit: & watche the same
 therunto with all industrie and supplication for all iudges and for me, that veteraunce
 maye be given vnto me, that I maye open my mouthe truely, to utter the secrets of my
 gospel (wherof I am messenger in beuons) that therein I maye speake freely, as I ought
 to speake. But that ye maye also knowe what condition I am in, and what I dooe. Tichit-
 us the deere brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall shewe you of all thynges
 whome I haue sent vnto you for the same purpose, that ye mighte knowe what case we
 haue in, and that he mighte comforte your hartes. Peace be vnto the brethren, and loue
 with faith, from God the father and from the lord Iesus Christ. Peace be with all them,
 whiche loue our lord Iesus Christ vnfeynedly. Amen.

Therefore it standeth by in hande to praye alwaye vnto him with continual sup-
 plications, and to desyer this of him from the bottome of our hartes, without
 ceasing in our praises day and night, that all saintes maye haue the vpper hand
 by this sweorde of the spirit. And it is also your duetie, to helpe me with your
 prayers, and to beseeche God that he would geue me plenteous veteraunce of
 the gospel, whansoever I shall preache it: and that it would please him to vse
 my mouth as an instrument vnto his owne glory, and to your saluation, so as
 I maye boldly and without shyfeking declare vnto al men the misical doctrine
 of the gospel, wherunto all men are called indifferently. And that I be not hin-
 dred by suche as labour by all possible meanes, that the glozve of the Gospel
 should not be spred abroad, for the doing wherof, I am made an embassadour,
 yea euen now being laden with chaynes, and suffering exceedingly, that I maye
 boldly get about the office committed vnto me. And that this mind maye still
 perswade with me vnto the ende, and that by the helpe of Christ, I maye freely
 speake, as it becommeth me to speake. For it is a rebuke for a preacher of the
 gospel to be afraid of any thing, that should hinder him from doyng the office
 of the gospel. To conclude, as concerning the state of myne owne thynges, &
 howe the matter standeth with me here, you shall knowe all of Tichitus my
 welbeloued brother, and not a brother onely for the sinceritie of his faith, but
 also a minister and an helper in the gospels businesse: whome I haue sent vnto
 you for this purpose, that you mighte knowe certainly in what state we are, and
 that you should be much comforted by his beyng there, lest your hartes should
 be discouraged through myne afflictions. For I am so tyed and bounde, that
 the gospel of Christ doeth triumphe, notwithstanding, euen out of the pris-
 son. My prayer is, that peace and mutual loue loyned with sincere faith,
 maye be vnto al the brethren. Of faith springeth charitie, & charitie now-
 risbeth concord. These thre with prosperous procedyng, graunt vnto
 you God the father, and the lord Iesus Christ. The loue and
 merciful goodnesse of God be for euer with all them that with
 an vnfained conscience and vnspotted life, loue the lord Iesus

Christe: and despying the transitory trybles of this
 worlde, folowe the thynges that are e-
 ternall and heauenly. And to con-
 firme this mine hartie prayer,
 I beseeche god graunt
 mercifully.
 Amen.

Thus endeth the paraphrase vpon the Epistle
 of S. Paul the Apostle to the
 Ephelians.